



COVERSHEET

Minister	Hon Andrew Little	Portfolio	Immigration
Title of Cabinet paper	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Date to be published	12 July 2023

List of documents that have been proactively released		
Date	Title	Author
September-October 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Office of the Minister of Immigration
28 September 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa DEV-22-MIN-0230 Minute	Cabinet Office
3 October 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa CAB-22-MIN-0421 Minute	Cabinet Office
29 July 2022	Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
18 August 2022	Draft Cabinet paper for consultation – Updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
18 August 2022	Parent Category – options for Green List sponsors and implementation	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment
9 September 2022	Final Cabinet paper – Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa	Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment

Information redacted

YES / NO (please select)

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with MBIE's policy on Proactive Release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Some information has been withheld to maintain legal professional privilege, privacy of natural persons, free and frank opinions and confidential advice to Government.



BRIEFING

Parent Category – options for Green List sponsors and implementation

Date:	18 August 2022	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	2223-0459

Action sought		
	Action sought	Deadline
Hon Michael Wood Minister of Immigration	Indicate your preferred options	22 August 2022

Contact for telephone discussion (if required)			
Name	Position	Telephone	1st contact
Andrew Craig	Manager, Immigration (Skills and Residence) Policy	Privacy of natural persons	
Emily Kay	Principal Policy Advisor		✓

The following departments/agencies have been consulted
Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development, Treasury, Immigration New Zealand.

Minister's office to complete:

Approved

Declined

Noted

Needs change

Seen

Overtaken by Events

See Minister's Notes

Withdrawn

Comments



BRIEFING

Parent Category – options for Green List sponsors and implementation

Date:	18 August 2022	Priority:	Medium
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	2223-0459

Purpose

To provide you with options for prioritising Green List sponsors within the Parent Category Resident Visa settings, should you wish, and further detail on implementation to be incorporated into a Cabinet paper.

Executive summary

In response to the briefing 2122-4075 *Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Visa* you took decisions about your preferred settings for the Parent Category to progress for Cabinet decisions, including introducing a ballot system for selecting future expressions of interest (EOIs), and processing the 5,620 existing EOIs chronologically before selections through a ballot begin.

Green List options

You also requested further advice on options for prioritising Green List residents and their parents. Creating favourable settings for this group of residents is broadly aligned with the intent of the Parent Category to support settlement of skilled migrants, and that of the Green List to support attraction of globally competitive skills.

However, on balance, we consider that the attraction factors are unlikely to be decisive for Green List migrants to move to New Zealand and given the complexity in operationalising and explaining the policy, preferential treatment is not warranted. Green List residents are generally likely to be well-paid and able to meet the income thresholds for sponsorship through the Parent Category. There are other important skills we are trying to retain as well as roles on the Green List, and there may be claims of unfairness if preferential treatment is provided. Pressure to add roles to the Green List would also grow.

If you do wish to proceed, the options we considered (from most to least preferred) are:

- allowing Green List residents to sponsor their parent from as soon as they are resident themselves (with no three year wait) – this is relatively easy to implement
- setting aside a number of visas for Green List residents' parents only, either within the current cap or in addition to it – this is complex to operationalise and may be seen as unfair
- allowing the parents of Green List residents to submit a Parent Category application without an EOI – this introduces a new channel which is complex to operationalise and will increase the numbers of people coming through the Parent Category either taking up the cap of 2,000 individual visas, or additional to the cap.

If you choose to provide preferential treatment for Green List residents, you will also need to clarify whether any benefit is:

- only available to new Green List residents and people who obtain residence through the highly paid pathway (people in roles paying twice median wage or more) – this is recommended as it fits with the attraction goal of these skilled residence pathways

or,

- for any resident or citizen already employed in a Green List role - there is less perceived unfairness with this option, but higher demand would dilute the impacts of preferential treatment.

When to select first ballots

You agreed selections of new EOIs from a ballot should begin only when the current queue of EOIs has been processed (2022-4075 refers), which could be in up to four years' time. Our view remains that this is the fairest approach to resuming processing.

However, if you are concerned that the Parent Category is not promptly accessible for new EOIs generally, or specifically Green List EOIs, you could choose to begin ballot selections as early as quarter two (April – June) of 2023. Selections from a ballot would occur concurrently to processing existing EOIs and could be for any new EOIs, for only Green List EOIs, or for both. However, there is a high risk that this would be seen as unfair 'queue-jumping' compared to those who have existing EOIs in the queue, and it would add a lot of operational complexities.

Implementation

You have agreed to begin selecting and processing existing EOIs in the Parent Category as soon as possible. You have also agreed to process all new EOIs as a ballot after the current on hand group is worked through chronologically. While the details are still to be finalised, the ballot could work by allowing an EOI to remain in the pool for two years (for multiple ballot draws) and then the EOI would expire. Any unsuccessful applicants would then need to submit again.

EOIs are currently paper-based and cost \$550. However, Immigration New Zealand (INZ) is planning to switch to online processes that are easier to use, and it is likely that in future there can be a reduced fee more commensurate with a ballot approach.

Ideally, we would prevent new EOIs from being submitted to the Parent Category while updating processes and fees **Free and frank opinions** . **Legal professional privilege**

We therefore recommend that you make an announcement that:

- Selections and processing of the existing EOIs with the changes agreed by Cabinet will begin in November (assuming Cabinet decisions on 19 September).
- New EOIs are to be selected through a ballot from the date of announcement.
- The future EOI system will be online from mid-2023 and fees will be reviewed to align with this change – people should wait to submit EOIs until after these changes are made.
- Future EOI selections through the ballot will only happen after the existing EOIs are processed chronologically.

Within four weeks of Cabinet decisions, you could certify immigration instructions which specify the changes as agreed by Cabinet and then make this announcement. Alternatively, you could wait to announce and make changes until fees and other operational changes have been made.

Decisions you take about the Green List options and implementation can be incorporated into the first updates to the draft Cabinet paper for Ministerial consultation, alongside any other feedback.

Recommended action

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) recommends that you:

- a **Note** that in response to the briefing 2122-4075 *Options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Visa* you requested further advice on options for prioritising Green List residents and their parents.

Noted

Green List options

- b **Agree** that for Green List and highly paid pathway residents (those paid twice median wage or more) either:
- a. there is no preferential treatment (recommended).
- or, Yes / No
- b. they will be able to sponsor their parent(s) through the Parent Category as soon as they obtain residence themselves rather than be resident for three years.
- and / or, Yes / No
- c. to prioritise their parents' EOIs by balloting them separately and assigning them 500 visas per year, either:
 - i. additional to the proposed 2,000 cap – totalling 2,500.
- or, Yes / No
- ii. within the existing cap – 500 of the existing 2,000 (recommended).
- Yes / No
- c **Agree** that any favourable settings (in bb or bc) only apply to people who obtain residence through the Green List or the highly paid pathway (those paid twice median wage or more) from September 2022.

Agree / Disagree

Timing for ballot selections

- d **Note** that you previously agreed to select future EOIs by ballot only after the current queue of EOIs is cleared in up to four years' time. However, you could begin the ballot for new EOIs (and/or new Green List EOIs) sooner, alongside processing the existing queue of EOIs.

Noted

- e **Confirm** when you would prefer to begin selections of new EOIs from the ballot – this could be either:
- a. only after the existing queue is cleared (recommended, and your previous decision)
- or, Yes / No
- b. in quarter two of 2023, with a small proportion of the cap of 2,000 visas assigned for any new EOIs plus any allocation for the Green List – 250 visas per annum, and the remaining 1,750 visas assigned for applicants with existing EOIs
- or, Yes / No
- c. should you agree to recommendation bb, in quarter two of 2023, 250 visas assigned for the ballot of Green List EOIs only, and the remaining 1,750 visas assigned for applicants with existing EOIs.

Yes / No

Implementation

- f **Note** that it is not possible to temporarily prevent new EOI submissions to the Parent Category while processing the current queue.

Noted

- g **Note** that if you certify immigration instructions within four weeks after Cabinet decisions, selections of existing EOIs can be resumed as early as November 2022 and any new EOIs will be balloted but moving processes online and making fees changes for new EOIs will not have been completed until mid-2023.

Noted

- h **Agree** to either:

a. progress to make changes and resume processing existing EOIs as soon as possible by certifying immigration instructions within four weeks after Cabinet decisions and announcing the changes

or,

Yes / No

b. only announce the changes and certify immigration instructions to resume selections of existing EOIs and direct new EOIs to a ballot once all process and fees changes are completed in the second quarter of 2023.

Yes / No

Siblings as joint sponsors

- i **Note** that Cabinet decisions to allow siblings to be joint sponsors would allow two adult children to sponsor their parent(s), and include many diverse family relationships, including stepsiblings, even if they did not grow up together.

Noted

Privacy of natural
persons

Andrew Craig
**Manager, Immigration (Skills and Residence)
Policy**
Labour, Science and Enterprise, MBIE

Hon Michael Wood
Minister of Immigration

18/08/2022

..... / /

Background

1. You were provided options for updating and reopening the Parent Category Resident Visa (Parent Category) (2122-4075 refers) and indicated that you are interested in further advice on settings that could apply for Green List resident sponsors within this visa category.
2. Based on your feedback that you prefer to resume chronological processing of existing EOIs as soon as possible, and that future EOIs should be selected from a ballot, we have explored options for implementation. Our advice on implementation and the risks and timeframes is included in this briefing alongside options for Green List sponsors.
3. We have also drafted a Cabinet paper including for you to conduct Ministerial consultation on your proposals for the Parent Category, which has also been provided to you (2223-0389 refers). We can include your preferred Green List options and implementation in this paper alongside any other feedback you may have.

Favourable settings for Green List sponsors

4. You have sought advice about options for favourable settings for Green List sponsors and their parents. Taking such measures is broadly aligned with the aim of the Parent Category to support the settlement of skilled migrants in New Zealand. Any preferential Parent Category settings for those who gain residence through the Green List may further support the Green List aims to attract highly skilled migrants to New Zealand to work in roles that are in domestic shortage and global demand.

Who should be included in favourable settings

5. If you intend to provide favourable settings for the Green List, we also recommend including migrants who obtain residence through the highly paid pathway to residence (for those paid twice median wage or more) as this is a comparable work to residence pathway that aims to attract highly skilled, highly paid migrant workers. To-date the settings of the Green List and the highly paid migrant's residence pathway have been aligned, such as providing open work rights for partners of these migrant workers when changes come into effect in December [CAB-21-MIN-0554 refers].
6. We recommend that any favourable settings you choose apply only to people who gained residence through the Green List or highly paid pathway, rather than a wider interpretation that includes all people who are in occupations that are on the Green List at the time of sponsoring. This clearly links the arrangement to the Green List as an attractive offer for migrant workers to come to New Zealand but is likely to be seen as unfair by residents in the Green List occupations that did not become resident through that pathway. However, widening availability to people in Green List occupations would create a large potential pool of sponsors, reduce the chances of new migrants coming through the Green List sponsoring their parents to obtain these visas, and increase operational complexity as INZ would have to confirm the sponsors' job as part of the application.

Providing preferential settings

7. Providing any settings that privilege one group more than another is likely to be criticised as unfair, particularly by those who do not benefit. The Green List is the subject of a high volume of Ministerial correspondence in this vein and requests for certain occupations to be included in the list to receive such favourable treatment are common. Adding to the favourable settings available to Green List by providing preferential settings in the Parent Category may increase this further.
8. Any addition of favourable settings for Green List residents and their parents will also introduce greater complexity in the Parent Category. The immigration system overall is

complex and MBIE and Immigration New Zealand (INZ) officials are focussed on ensuring simplification of the system and policy settings wherever possible.

9. Priority treatment for Green List and highly paid residents through the Parent Category is unlikely to be a decisive factor in any decisions to emigrate to New Zealand. The income threshold you have indicated you prefer for the Parent Category also already targets higher skilled migrant workers by requiring at least 1.5 times median wage as the baseline for one sponsor supporting one parent. This is likely to include many people who are in roles on the Green List, and those with a highly paid pathway to residence. Further prioritising Green List and highly paid pathway residents may be more complex and controversial than it is beneficial.
10. Given that Parent Category settings aim to reduce the risk of costs to Crown-funded services by requiring sponsors to meet an income threshold, and that this has shown to be an effective means to reduce risk, we do not recommend exempting Green List or highly paid sponsors from income thresholds within the Parent Category.
11. There are a number of options to provide Green List and highly paid pathway sponsors and their parents more favourable settings. The complexity and inequities increase for each of these options which are:
 - a. allowing Green List and highly paid residents to sponsor parents immediately, removing the requirement for this group to be resident in New Zealand for three years prior to being able to sponsor a parent
 - b. giving Green List and highly paid residents priority access to the Parent Category, by either:
 - i. selecting their EOIs in advance of any others
 - ii. ensuring the EOIs of Green List or highly paid sponsors' parents are more likely to be drawn from the ballot than others
 - iii. allowing their parents to make applications for residence directly without being required to submit an EOI or being balloted.
12. We do not recommend that favourable settings for Green List and highly paid residents are progressed, however should you choose to, we recommend that you remove the three-year residence requirement for people who gained residence through the Green List or highly paid pathway so they can sponsor a parent immediately on gaining residence themselves.
13. If you choose to provide priority access to the Parent Category, we recommend this is done by ensuring the EOIs of Green List or highly paid sponsors' parents are more likely to be drawn from the ballot than others.

Changing the duration of residence before becoming eligible to sponsor

14. Removing the requirement to have been resident in New Zealand for three years for Green List and highly paid sponsors to support their parents through the Parent Category is the simplest way to provide some advantage to them.
15. This provides quicker access to the ballot but no greater chance of the EOI being drawn from it. However, you could make changes in addition to this. This is a relatively simple to administer and less likely to be perceived as unfair compared to priority selections. There are some risks relating to establishing income thresholds and ensuring sponsors are in the country ahead of any parent which can be mitigated by evidentiary requirements.
16. Outright selection of Green List EOIs first before balloting all others is likely to mean only Green List and highly paid residents' parents ever receive visas – the entire cap of 2,000

could be allocated to them, and we do not recommend it for this reason. The number of people who will obtain residence through the Green List cannot be predicted precisely given its recent introduction.

Making EOIs more likely to be drawn from the ballot

17. Alternatively, Green List EOIs could be balloted separately within the cap and have 500 visas per annum assigned for them, or in addition to the proposed cap of 2,000. This would mean Green List EOIs are far more likely to be selected than those within the general pool of EOIs as demand would be lower, and supply of available visas would be higher.
18. This option clearly favours those on the Green List or highly paid pathway and is likely to fulfil your objectives for this group, without disadvantaging other applicants. However, it is likely to be criticised by the wider group of sponsors and their parents. It could be perceived that the arrangement both unfairly favours those on the Green List, and makes visas unavailable to others, where they otherwise may have had a chance to have one of those visas in a general allocation of the cap to all applicants. It also increases the complexity of understanding and operating the Parent Category by making a two-track system, with two ballots and two caps in operation.
19. We recommend that the number of visas for the Parent Category remains 2,000 and any Green List allocation is made within this. Adding 500 visas per annum for Green List parents will place increased demand pressures on the health and social welfare systems, though an additional 500 people is not a significant increase, the Parent Category cohort are likely to be skewed toward older age groups which tend to be more costly to the health system in particular.
20. We also considered some other methods for making Green List EOIs more likely to be selected from the ballot, such as weighting the EOIs for favourable selection from a general ballot. This is not as effective as a separate ballot and may create unintended impacts such as a perception that only Green List EOIs could be selected making the category seen as inaccessible.
21. As discussed in the following implementation section, any ballot for the Green List that you elect to create can begin at an earlier date than other new EOIs, if you wish.

Allowing Green List parents to go straight to application

22. Rather than submitting EOIs, you could permit Green List and highly paid sponsors' parents to apply directly for residence and skip the step of submitting an EOI for random selection through the ballot. We do not recommend taking this option. It would require either:
 - a. capping the number of visas available per annum and allowing excess applications to queue for processing, or
 - b. uncapping the number of visas available and accepting the risk of consequential costs to the Crown from this group.
23. If you do choose to take this approach and cap the number of visas available to Green List parents to limit the risk of cost to the Crown, there are likely to be long queues, similar to the current queue, which will increase wait times for visa processing. The queue for processing is likely to quickly become lengthy and this will not make the Parent Category accessible to Green List or highly paid migrants' parents. Balloting of applications to avoid queues is not possible, and should you prefer balloting, the previous options outlined for making Green List EOIs more likely to be selected are your best choice.
24. An uncapped category for Green List parents to attain residence would avoid queues but mean accepting much larger consequential costs to the Crown including welfare costs, and impacts on health and aged care services, as well as increased INZ resourcing which does

not match the relative priority of this visa category. You could restrict the offer to a one-off choice made within the first three months of obtaining residence in order to restrict demand to some degree. However, this is complex to operationalise.

Implementing favourable Parent Category settings for the Green List

25. You have agreed to start balloting new EOIs after the current queue of EOIs has been cleared in up to four years' time. This remains our advice, as it is the simplest and fairest approach, but if you wanted to start a small ballot earlier for new EOIs (Green List EOIs and/or all new EOIs) this could begin from mid-2023. You could take this choice now or wait until further information is available about the likely time to process the existing EOIs in 2023.
26. If you wanted to begin selections from a small ballot earlier, you could choose ratios of:
 - a. all new EOIs (i.e. 1,750 visas for existing EOIs processed chronologically, 250 visas for new EOIs selected from the ballot), or
 - b. only Green List EOIs to ensure that the favourable settings you choose to create begin as soon as possible (i.e. 2,000 visas for existing EOIs processed chronologically, 500 visas for new Green List EOIs selected from the ballot – totalling 2,500 visas), or
 - c. both Green List and the general pool of new EOIs (i.e. 1,750 visas for existing EOIs processed chronologically, 250 visas for new EOIs selected from the ballot, 500 additional visas for Green List EOIs– totalling 2,500 visas).
27. However, any concurrent selection of existing EOIs and new EOIs is likely to be seen to be very unfair, particularly by those who have waited up to ten years to have their EOI selected. Concurrently processing a ballot and a queue is also operationally complex and resource intensive. It would be likely to force trade-offs with resourcing for processing other visa categories or create delays to processing the Parent Category – especially if 500 additional visas per annum are introduced for the Green List. It will also be complex to communicate to customers.
28. Removing the three-year residence requirements for Green List and highly paid residents and including the appropriate income and onshore evidentiary requirements can be completed alongside the other changes as agreed by Cabinet.
29. Should you choose to allow Green List parents to apply direct for residence, there will be more work required and we would provide you with further advice on possible timeframes.

Implementation

30. We understand your preference is that processing of existing EOIs resumes as soon as possible once Cabinet decisions about changes to the Parent Category are taken and have outlined an implementation plan to achieve this. However, there are some legal and reputational risks associated with resuming selections and processing as soon as possible for you to note before you agree to progress this implementation plan.
31. We have also provided clarification about some other details in preparation for implementing Cabinet's final decisions once they are taken.

Resuming processing and preventing new EOIs from adding to the existing queue

32. In the previous briefing (2122-4075) we advised that the Parent Category could be temporarily closed to new EOI submissions by making regulations under the Immigration Act 2009 while processing existing EOIs resumes. This would be beneficial in order to:
 - a. prevent a large influx of new EOIs which add to the existing queue of the 5,620 EOIs (that will be processed chronologically before selections from a ballot could begin),

- b. ensure changes like shifting to online processes are in place for a smooth customer experience
 - c. new, **Free and frank opinions** fees are in place for the new EOIs in the ballot.
33. Our initial views are that new EOIs will be submitted to a ballot and remain current for two years while multiple draws from the ballot are conducted. New EOIs submitted before the ballot is being drawn from (after existing EOIs are processed) will have a longer duration they remain current for. We will provide you further detail on this.
34. **Legal professional privilege**
35. We recommend that instead, to begin processing existing EOIs as soon as possible and mitigate risks that new EOIs are added to the queue, the following steps are followed:
- a. ahead of any announcement you certify immigration instructions that from the date of announcement new EOIs are held for future selections through a ballot – this can happen within four weeks of Cabinet decisions
 - b. over the month following announcement of the changes, INZ contacts existing EOI submitters to update their details and withdraw their EOI if they wish; and those who withdrew in 2020 to invite them to submit a new EOI if they want to.
 - c. from as early as mid-November 2022 (assuming Cabinet decisions on 19 September), INZ resumes selections of existing EOIs and begin processing applications – this will scale up over the coming year.
 - d. in the second quarter of 2023, INZ will change the EOI and applications for the Parent Category to be online, fees will likely need to be updated **Free and frank opinions** and regulations need to be made to enact this by seeking Cabinet approval to the change in fees and then to the regulations that give effect to it.
 - e. the ballot selections from the pool of new EOIs will commence only once the current EOIs (all those submitted pre-announcement) are processed chronologically, which could be in up to four years.
36. However, this means INZ will be resuming existing EOI selections at the same time as processing a large number of new EOIs (there will be no pause in EOI submissions) and this is likely to have impacts on processing. There is likely pent-up demand from those wanting to submit EOIs, and there will be new interest when announcements are made about the changes. A significant flow of new EOIs will require prioritisation of processing resource (which could impact processing timeframes for other visa products).
37. **Legal professional privilege**
38. There will be no benefit for people submitting EOIs during this period and we recommend that communications about the changes to the Parent Category encourage people to wait to submit their EOI until after the fees review is completed. However, it is likely there will still be some EOIs submitted during the period existing fees apply and they will not be refunded.
39. There are several other options for implementation, however we do not think these meet your objectives for resuming operation of the Parent Category. The options are to:

- a. close the Parent Category temporarily while changes are fully made by revoking immigration instructions to prevent new EOIs from being submitted. However, this would mean all the existing EOIs would need to be declined.
 - b. avoid the legal and reputational risks by waiting to certify instructions, announce changes to the Parent Category and resume selections of existing EOIs until online processes are fully implemented and associated fees can be updated and made through regulations. However, this will not be complete until quarter two in 2023.
40. We will progress work to revise the fees for the Parent Category and support you to report back to Cabinet to make the required regulatory changes in early 2023.

Detail of processing existing EOIs and new EOI submissions

41. INZ plans to contact existing EOI submitters immediately following the announcement to ensure the EOI queue is as up to date as possible. It is likely that during this period a number of people will elect to withdraw based on their sponsors' eligibility to support their application with the new income thresholds in place or given the duration many of the EOIs have been sitting in the queue, some peoples' circumstances will have changed, and others may not meet health eligibility requirements to apply.
42. This process is likely to reduce the EOI queue somewhat. People who choose to withdraw will be refunded, but this is likely to take some time due to the age of the EOIs and the practicalities of refunding offshore bank accounts.
43. Selections of existing EOIs can resume from November. When EOI selections are made an invitation to apply (ITA) is made and the parent(s) must complete an application. The first selections in November will be asked to submit a paper-based application, which is more resource-intensive to process and carries business continuity risk. However, subsequent selections will be able to submit online based applications as the resumed processing of this category is scaled up.
44. It is likely that the issuing of the first Parent Category Resident Visas after EOI selections and processing is resumed in November will take multiple months. There are several reasons for this:
- a. the age of EOIs and the likely length of time necessary for parents and sponsors to become familiar with new settings, update information and so on
 - b. the length of time that it is likely to take for applicants to gather necessary health and other information to make their application
 - c. time to process after this is complete while staff are becoming familiar with the visa category (as it has not been processed for multiple years).
45. This lead in time and scaling up required to get processing of the Parent Category up and running again may mean that the cap of 2,000 visas is not met in the first year (first 12 months of processing from November), though INZ will aim to meet it. However, annual caps of visas are generally considered over a financial year, and the 2,000-visa per year cap will likely be met within the 2023/24 financial year if selections resume in November 2022.
46. There is likely to be a relatively high decline rate for the Parent Category in coming years given the duration many EOIs have been waiting in the queue, and the likelihood that some parents will not meet health or other eligibility criteria. Some may withdraw applications in advance, or others may choose to progress an application which will ultimately be declined on the basis they do not eligibility requirements. Many people are also likely to appeal residence decisions which will mean lengthy processing of their cases.

Detail of the joint sponsors policy change

47. You agreed that siblings should be able to be joint sponsors in addition to partners in current settings. To be clear, we intend that there will still be a maximum of two sponsors able to support up to six parents between them, however those sponsors can be related to the parent applicant(s) and not in a partnership as sponsors.
48. Feedback from the Ministry for Pacific Peoples has been that Pacific people may want to include more than two siblings as sponsors, given large families in some cases. However, we think that signing up more than two sponsors to the sponsorship obligations and testing the income and relationships of more than two sponsors to parent(s) becomes administratively difficult, and less focussed on skilled migrant settlement.
49. However, we intend to implement the joint sponsor settings to be as inclusive as possible of any family arrangements possible for two siblings. We will do this by testing the familial relationship between each adult child sponsor to either of up to two parents that can be included in an EOI or the application, and not the relationship between the two adult children.
50. This means that stepsiblings can sponsor regardless of whether they had been stepsiblings prior to the age of 18, whereas testing the 'sibling relationship' or requiring both adult children to have a familial relationship with the principal applicant of the two parents would exclude them from being sponsors. We do not see any increased financial risk or risks of cost to the Crown based on including this relationship.

Next steps

51. We will include your preferred options for the Green List sponsors, and the implementation details in the Parent Category Cabinet paper before it is sent for Ministerial consultation. The paper is planned to be considered at Cabinet Development Committee on 14 September and by Cabinet on 19 September.
52. Unless you choose otherwise, implementation will progress quickly after Cabinet decisions – with selections of existing EOIs to resume as soon as mid-November 2022.
53. We will also progress work to revise the fees for the Parent Category on the basis of changes to a random selection of EOIs through a ballot in future, and online-based processing rather than paper-based. We will report back to you with further advice and detailed timeframes for making fees changes.